

1. INTRODUCTION

Trucks compose about 5 percent of traffic in Washington, DC. They carry goods to retailers, restaurants, and office buildings; they supply industry and construction facilities with the necessary raw materials; and they haul away unwanted materials. They play an important role to the activities of the city. However, they also pose important traffic management, roadway condition, and security challenges. Because of their size and weight, trucks are disproportionate in their affect on traffic and in their wear and tear on roadways. They are often unwelcome in residential areas because of nuisances like noise, exhaust and vibrations, as well as safety issues associated with speeding and other traffic violations. They also require loading and unloading facilities, which are scarce in a densely populated city like Washington, DC. Further, because of their storage capacity, they can easily stow large amounts of dangerous materials, which, because of accidents or maleficence, have the potential to compromise public safety. The combination of traffic congestion, resident complaints, the need to provide better information and services to truck operators, and security concerns has prompted the District Department of Transportation (DDOT) to commission this study for the development of a comprehensive strategy for managing truck traffic and deliveries.

DDOT asked the Volpe National Transportation Systems Center (Volpe) to conduct an analysis of existing truck traffic conditions in the District, successful truck management practices from other areas, stakeholder interests and opinions, and security concerns. Using this background information, Volpe has developed a set of recommendations for improved truck management in the District, including creating officially-designated truck routes, adding a Motor Carrier Office (MCO) within DDOT that would coordinate all motor carrier management issues, and provide better on- and off-street loading/unloading facilities through a combination of parking rule changes, parking enforcement, and zoning rules regarding off-street loading docks.

Section 2 of this report presents an analysis of existing truck traffic conditions. Section 3 provides information about successful truck management practices from 11 regions in the United States, Canada, and the United Kingdom. Following this, Sections 4 and 5 provide summaries and analyses of the concerns and opinions of stakeholders including businesses, truck operators, government agencies, and community groups. Section 6 presents background, successful practices, and recommendations regarding truck-related security issues. Section 7 presents recommendations for a system of officially designated truck routes. Section 8 provides information and recommendations from a pilot parking study of a stretch of K Street. Section 9 proposes the creation of the Motor Carrier Management Office within DDOT that would coordinate truck-related functions within the District government and serve as a one-stop-shop for addressing the truck-related concerns of businesses, truck operators, and residents. Finally, the recommendations are compiled and presented in more detail in Section 10.